

SOFTWARE

PREVIEW

Mr Site Takeaway Website Pro

Whether you have a thriving eBay shop or simply want to get a web presence for your new small business, you'll struggle to find an easier or more cost-effective web-creation tool than Mr Site's new Website Pro.

The software takes care of registering a domain name (including .com sites), creation of individual pages, publishing the site to the web and keeping track of statistics so you know how popular the site is. There's even SiteBoost, which helps push your website up in Google's rankings to ensure that potential customers find the site easily.

Even if you have a diverse range of products to sell, Mr Site Pro makes it easy to list them, and customers can easily pay securely by credit or debit card.

Look out for our in-depth review next month.

Jim Martin

Deputy Editor



jim@computershopper.co.uk

ENOETIC Photology

★★★★★

\$39 (around £20 inc VAT)
From www.getphotology.com

If your hard disk is stuffed full of digital photos, you're probably wishing there was an instant way to find those you want without having to trawl through endless folders, or having to remember when the pictures were taken. Windows Vista lets you tag each photo with keywords, but few people have the time or inclination to tag thousands of images.

Photology doesn't use tags, but analyses your photos and automatically indexes them. This allows you to instantly filter them by attributes that you wouldn't normally expect. For example, if you're looking for a photo of a sunflower, simply click the Color filter and choose the appropriate shade of yellow. Alternatively, use the 'content' button to search for photos containing flowers.

There are plenty of other ways to search, too. Choose from over- or underexposed photos, blurry or sharp photos, landscape or portrait orientation, time of day, and more. It's a quirky system, but it works well because you can combine filters to narrow down the results.

If you're after that Miami beach snap and you can remember which year you went, you can search by selecting the year, then photos with beach content, and even pick the colour of someone's Speedos.

SUMMARY

- ✓ Finds photos quickly
- ✓ Lets you edit and share photos easily
- ✗ Limited format support

IMAGE ORGANISER Requires Windows XP/Vista, 2GHz processor, 512MB RAM, 500MB disk space
DETAILS www.getphotology.com



▲ Photology's simple interface means you can find the photos you want, fast

Chances are you'll find the exact photo on the first or second screen of results.

Thanks to indexing, searching is almost instant, and you'll usually find a match in under 30 seconds. Performance will depend on your PC's specification, but Photology fully supports multicore processors.

In addition to searching, Photology provides basic tools such as brightness, contrast and cropping for editing photos non-destructively. You can upload images directly to a Flickr account, as well as emailing or printing them. A share-to-web button uploads your images to a temporary location, and you can then simply send friends the URL so they can download them.

It would be nice to have support for more than JPEG, TIFF and PNG image formats. Still, at £20, Photology is good value.

Jim Martin

ACRONIS True Image 11 Home

★★★★★

£40 inc VAT (upgrade £30 inc VAT)
From <http://eu.acronis.com>

We've long been fans of Acronis True Image at *Shopper*, constantly relying on it for our disk-imaging needs. True Image allows you to make a complete copy of your hard disk so you can quickly restore your system in the event of a broken hard disk.

Version 11 brings updates. The interface has been simplified from True Image 10. There are just four main options and no confusing menus down the side. The backup state is clearly shown using a traffic light colour system for instant feedback. There are also a couple of new features that will please those who are unfamiliar with disk imaging.

One is the Try & Decide mode, a more reassuring and easier-to-use version of Windows' built-in System Restore function. It uses True Image's established Secure Zone – a hidden partition on your hard disk for storing images – but operates in a different way.

With Try & Decide enabled, potentially damaging acts such as software installations and opening email attachments are performed on a virtual replica of your system drive within the Secure Zone, rather than on your main drive. When you've used the system for long enough to be satisfied your PC won't keel over, just apply or discard the changes. If

SUMMARY

- ✓ Reliable backups
- ✓ File-shredding tools included
- ✗ Fairly expensive

DISK-IMAGING SOFTWARE Requires Windows 2000/XP/Vista, 256MB RAM, 300MB disk space
PRODUCT CODE B000VLZCEW
DETAILS <http://eu.acronis.com>



▲ True Image 11 Home is all you need for backup and protection against hard disk failure

you choose the latter, one reboot has your PC back exactly how it was before you enabled Try & Decide.

The other new feature is rarely seen in backup software: privacy tools. There's a file shredder for destroying confidential files, and a full disk cleanser. The cleanser is useful if you need to discard an old hard disk – after an upgrade, or when returning a loaned laptop to your company – as it permanently erases everything on the drive.

All the usual backup and restore functions are still present, such as scheduling tasks, validating archives, the excellent Recovery Manager (which you can boot to if Windows is corrupted), and the choice of full disk backup or individual files. It's not a huge update, but there is certainly enough here for anyone who does not already back up their PCs.

David Bayon

STEGANOS Privacy Suite 2008

★★★★★

£40 inc VAT

From www.steganos.com

Leaving your data unprotected can have many consequences, from embarrassing revelations to more serious business disclosures. Steganos Privacy Suite 2008 works at the coalface of computer security. It is concerned with the integrity of your user- and application-created data, rather than the integrity of your system, making it the ideal companion to your existing internet security suite.

Privacy Suite 2008's main attraction is that it lets you create encrypted data safes. A safe can be on your hard disk or a removable drive, and its contents are unreadable unless you know the password. You can use a USB flash drive to store your password. This means you can use a long complex password without having to remember it. Safes help to keep sensitive files encrypted but easily accessible, which is useful if your computer has multiple users. To protect your communications, you can also create a Safe to hold all your Outlook information so your emails, contacts and calendar can be accessed only with a password.

Portable safes can be created to transport files securely. These are saved on a USB drive or CD, and

will automatically mount as a separate drive on any PC when you enter the security password. You can also encrypt individual files and folders either through the included file manager or by right-clicking on the file anywhere in Windows.

When you delete a file from your hard disk, it isn't physically destroyed – only the record of its existence is, leaving the OS free to overwrite the actual file if and when required. This means traces of old files can remain on your computer long after you have 'deleted' them. The Shredder tool covers your tracks by thoroughly removing selected files and folders from your computer. It does this by overwriting them once, or multiple times, or employing the time-consuming but intensive Gutmann method to stymie even the most persistent snoopers.

All three methods can also be used for a deep clean, which covers all reported free space on a drive. Like encryption and decryption tools, the Shredder can be invoked instantly with a right-click on any file or folder.

Privacy Suite 2008 also includes the Internet TraceDestructor. This lets you dictate which data, such as cookies, temporary internet files, passwords and recently opened lists, should be saved

SUMMARY

- ✓ Effective encryption and deletion
- ✓ Easy to use
- ✗ Relatively pricy

PRIVACY SOFTWARE Requires Windows XP/Vista, 256MB RAM, 100MB disk space
PRODUCT CODE B000ZLQZOE
DETAILS www.steganos.com



▲ Privacy Suite ensures your files remain private

from internet sessions and what should be deleted. Unlike much of this suite, non-Microsoft applications such as Firefox and Opera are supported, as well as media players such as QuickTime and RealPlayer and file archivers such as WinRAR.

Privacy Suite 2008 also provides a level of misleadingly named, but potentially useful, anti-theft protection. By registering your computer with Steganos and activating the AntiTheft application, your computer transmits a record of its IP address to a dedicated log on the Steganos server. If your stolen computer is connected to the internet, it will provide information that could potentially help you locate it.

Steganos Privacy Suite is a comprehensive data protection system. Just remember to use it alongside an internet security suite that includes tools such as anti-virus and firewall protection.

David McKinnon

Also consider...

OPENOFFICE OpenOffice.org 2.1

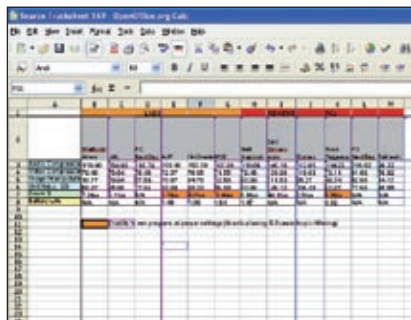
★★★★★

Free

From www.openoffice.org

BEST BUY OpenOffice is a completely free office suite, and it's brilliant. It might feel a little old-fashioned next to Microsoft Office's flashy features, but it has a number of excellent applications including a word processor, spreadsheet, database and presentation program. It's an essential piece of software for any PC owner.

OFFICE SUITE Requires Windows 98 or later, Pentium processor, 128MB RAM, 800MB disk space
DETAILS www.openoffice.org
FULL REVIEW Sep 2007



ADOBE Creative Suite 3 Design Premium

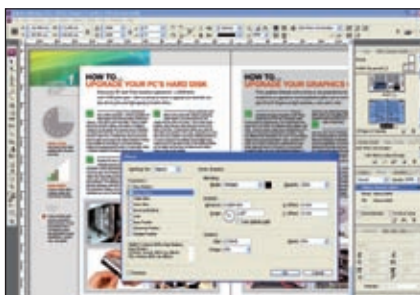
★★★★★

£1,496 inc VAT

From www.amazon.co.uk

BEST BUY Adobe's Creative Suite has quickly become the best bundle of creative software around. With its new Design Premium, it's got even better. The bundle includes InDesign, Photoshop Extended, Illustrator, Acrobat Professional, Flash Pro and Dreamweaver – everything you need, whether you're creating work for print or the web.

CREATIVE SOFTWARE Requires Windows XP SP2/Vista, 512MB RAM PRODUCT CODE 29500009
DETAILS www.adobe.co.uk FULL REVIEW Aug 2007



ADOBE Photoshop Lightroom 1.0

★★★★★

£170 inc VAT

From www.memory-express.co.uk

BEST BUY Adobe's Lightroom is everything a digital camera enthusiast could want. It helps manage your images, process RAW files, correct colour, retouch and export to a range of media. It's brilliant to use and, although designed for professional photographers, a great choice for anyone with an expensive camera.

PHOTO-EDITING SOFTWARE Requires Windows XP/Vista, Pentium 4 processor, 768MB RAM, 1GB disk space
PRODUCT CODE 19250102 DETAILS www.adobe.co.uk
FULL REVIEW Jul 2007



ABLETON Live 7

★★★★★

£289 inc VAT

From www.dolphinmusic.co.uk

Ableton Live is a professional music-production package that handles audio recording, MIDI sequencing, synthesis and mixing. Unusually for a product of this type, it also excels at remixing tracks in real time so it's a fantastic choice for electronic music producers and forward-thinking DJs who want to manipulate pre-recorded music live on stage.

This latest version shows maturity, with many new features bringing background improvements rather than new toys. Internal mixing and EQ processing is now 64-bit, and distortion-based effects offer improved anti-aliasing for more analogue-sounding results. Those who take compressor effects seriously will appreciate the new side-chaining capability, plus an additional mode that mimics the behaviour of vintage analogue compressors. Tempo changes are supported, mix automation is easier to edit and MIDI timing and memory management have seen improvements.

The more exciting new features comprise support for REX files – a powerful format that lends itself to mangling drum loops – and a new module called Drum Rack. This goes way beyond

the existing eight-voice drum sampler, allowing virtual drum machines to be built from up to 128 samples, instruments or layered instruments and effects.

For those who demand more new toys, Ableton has added a new flagship product called Ableton Suite. This includes Live and its Essential Instrument Collection, which handles a range of acoustic emulations and abstract synth sounds based on a 15GB sample pool, plus a further seven virtual instruments. Two are established Ableton products covering advanced sampling and frequency modulation (FM) synthesis, while two are sample libraries for the Drum Rack, covering vintage drum machines and acoustic kits. The other three use a synthesis technique called physical modelling to emulate analogue synthesis, electric pianos and stringed instruments. The latter is the least realistic of

the three, but excels at weird noises that are unobtainable by other means. All three are capable of excellent results, and the electric piano is particularly impressive.

The Suite is expensive at £539 including VAT, but the price increase over Live is reasonable considering that the seven top-quality virtual

SUMMARY

- ✓ Packed with inventive features
- ✓ Peerless instrument bundle in Suite
- ✗ Not ideal for acoustic instruments

MUSIC-PRODUCTION SOFTWARE Requires Windows XP/Vista or Mac OS X 10.3.9, 1.5GHz processor, 512MB RAM, 16GB disk space (37GB for the Suite)
PRODUCT CODE B001268SFU
DETAILS www.ableton.com



▲ Live 7 is ideal for live remixing and creating radical sounds

instruments complement each other so well and would usually cost around £100 each if bought separately. Upgrades from version 6 cost £99 for Live 7 and £289 for Ableton Suite.

Ableton Live has more inspiring features than any of its competitors, but it also has some weaknesses. It lacks the ability to crossfade audio clips on the timeline, or any features to facilitate recording and compiling of multiple takes. Its snap-to-grid function includes a shift-relative-to-grid option when moving notes in a MIDI clip, but not for clips on the timeline (see *Software Help* on page 160). These omissions will probably go unnoticed by musicians who produce in electronic genres, but for recording and editing live performances they are more significant.

For this reason, Sonar remains our top recommendation for general-purpose recording. Still, if radical sound manipulation, live remixing or an inspired user interface are more important, Live is the software to get.

Ben Pitt

Also consider...

ROXIO Easy Media Creator Suite 10

★★★★★

£40 inc VAT

From www.kikatek.com



This suite comes with almost all the media-editing tools you'll ever need. Its greatest strengths are its tight integration between all the modules and its friendly, task-oriented interface. With the recent drop in price, it's now even better value and it's the best media suite you can buy.

VIDEO-EDITING SOFTWARE Requires Windows XP or Vista, 500MHz processor, 128MB RAM (1.6GHz, 512MB for Vista), 3.2GB disk space PRODUCT CODE 048068411
DETAILS www.roxio.co.uk FULL REVIEW Jan 2008



KASPERSKY Internet Security 7.0

★★★★★

£43 inc VAT

From www.kaspersky.com



With a clear interface and superb anti-virus protection, the latest version of Kaspersky's Internet Security is great value. It deflected every web exploit we threw at it, and its firewall is so discreet we had to double-check it was running. There's excellent spam filtering, instant messaging integration and various tools for cleaning up after an infection. Watch for special deals on Kaspersky's website if you don't want to spend this much.

INTERNET SECURITY SUITE Requires Windows 2000/XP/Vista, 800MHz processor, 512MB RAM, 50MB disk space
DETAILS www.kaspersky.com FULL REVIEW Mar 2008



RS AUDIALS Radiotracker 4.0 Platinum

★★★★★

£21 inc VAT

From <http://shop.audials.com>



Want to build your music collection for just £21? Radiotracker lets you legally record automatically from internet radio stations. Just choose from a variety of genres, or enter specific artists or tracks. Radiotracker will then ensure that, when they are played, they are transformed into MP3s on your hard disk, complete with ID3 tags.

MP3 DOWNLOAD SOFTWARE Requires Windows Me or later, hard disk space for tracks PRODUCT CODE 300099362
DETAILS <http://radiotracker.com> FULL REVIEW Mar 2008



COREL Paint Shop Pro X2

★★★★★

£60 inc VAT

From www.amazon.co.uk

Paint Shop Pro X2 is a credible alternative to Photoshop CS3 and its low-cost counterpart, Photoshop Elements, and makes regular appearances on best-selling software lists.

It combines Elements' home-oriented features, such as wizards for guiding users through common tasks, with powerful tools that Adobe reserves for CS3, such as layer masks and Blend Ranges. Colour correction includes precise curve editing and benefits from histogram displays. Creative effects include warping tools absent from Elements, plus localised Hue and Saturation brushes that CS3 lacks. It can export in CMYK colour, used to prepare images for professional printing, but can't work natively with these files. For this, it's worth splashing out on CS3.

In our review of Paint Shop Pro Photo XI (*Labs, Shopper 228*) we criticised the lack of layer styles, so it's great to see them added here. They comprise drop shadow, glow, reflection, bevel and emboss effects. Unlike similar tools in the Effects menu, they're applied non-destructively so that the layer being affected can be edited further. This is ideal for text and designing buttons and other furniture for websites.

The improved Makeover Tools are designed to make your portrait shots look more attractive. Blemish Fixer works well and the

Suntan tool is quite convincing, although it's not possible to delete areas if you go over the edge of an area of skin. Toothbrush and Eye Drop are hopeless at whitening teeth and eyes. These one-click effects attempt to guess the edges of the area to be processed, but rarely look convincing and often made subjects appear to have stuck their faces in a bag of flour. Thinify is even worse: it uses a coarse warp that looks more like a squashed photo than a thinner subject. It's more likely to perplex or offend people than impress them.

HDR Merge is a new tool for combining up to five photos taken using exposure bracketing. This is where a camera takes several identical shots, but at different exposures. HDR Merge is useful when shooting subjects with very bright and dark areas (known as a high dynamic range, hence HDR), since different exposures are required to capture the detail in darker and brighter areas. HDR Merge attempts to combine the best bits of each to produce the perfect shot. The resulting images have less contrast than the originals, but

by compressing the dynamic range, both the highlights and shadows become well exposed. However, the areas in between are a composite of both images, which can lead to ghosting if there's even the smallest amount of movement between shots. Even so, this feature is easy to use and a lot of fun.

SUMMARY

- ✓ Powerful features at a great price
- ✓ Plenty of home-oriented features
- ✗ Interface not as fluid as Elements

IMAGE-EDITING SOFTWARE Requires Windows XP/Vista, 2GHz processor, 768MB RAM, 500MB disk space
PRODUCT CODE PSPPX2IEPC
DETAILS www.corel.co.uk



▲ Express Lab is a simplified editing environment for processing batches of photos quickly

The new Express Lab is a simplified interface for quickly improving batches of photos. It includes crop and rotate tools, effective colour correction, the same Makeover tools described above and red-eye reduction. It resembles the editing functions found in photo-management software such as Picasa (*Labs, Shopper 238*), which is no bad thing. However, it's a shame its file management isn't proficient. The main part of the application has an excellent Organiser module for sorting and tagging photos, but this is only partially accessible from Express Lab.

Other new features include a darker-coloured interface that is less distracting when making colour adjustments, subtle watermarks to add your name or web address to images and various other improvements. Overall, this is a valuable update that's just about worth the upgrade price of £49.

For first-time buyers who need advanced features but can't afford Photoshop CS3, it's the obvious choice. However, for most home users, Photoshop Elements' friendlier interface and its excellent integration with online gallery space make it the better product.

Ben Pitt

LINGUATEC Personal Translator 2008

★★★

£358 inc VAT

From <http://uk.insight.com>

Linguattec's Personal Translator 2008 Professional World Edition is the company's flagship translation software. It can translate English into seven different languages and back again, as well as integrate seamlessly with Microsoft Office applications such as Outlook, Word and PowerPoint.

You can access translation tools from within Microsoft Office or by using the standalone program. In Office applications you'll see a new menu that lets you quickly select the languages you want and translate sections or entire documents, presentations and emails.

The standalone program gives you access to Personal Translator's advanced features. Here, the simple

layout means the source and destination languages you've selected appear in the top and bottom panes of the screen. Just type in or paste the text you want translated. Then choose to translate certain sections or the entire text.

The standard of translation into French and German was usually reasonable. Like most translation programs, it was accurate at

translating text consisting of simple subject-verb-object sentences, but fell down with unusual word order or idiomatic expressions. It also made some odd mistakes, such as mixing up the French words for 'to' and 'from', completely changing the meaning of sentences.

The Professional version has a translation memory, which stores stock



▲ Personal Translator integrates into office applications but also has its own interface

translations of certain phrases. You can add your own translations to the memory, but stock sentences cannot be adapted intelligently. So if the phrase "seven people were hurt" is stored and you type in "six people were hurt" it doesn't refer to the memory to help with the translation.

Personal Translator 2008 is an easy-to-use translation program, but it's expensive, and the standard of its translations is no better than Google's free online Translate software. You can buy cut-down single-language versions of Personal Translator for around £30, but Google's free service is still just as good.

Chris Fynamore

SUMMARY

- ✓ Easy to use
- ✗ Google's free translations just as good
- ✗ Expensive

TRANSLATION SOFTWARE Requires Windows XP SP2/Vista, Pentium processor, 512MB RAM, 300MB disk space per language, Office XP, 2002, 2003 or 2007 for translation integration, internet connection for activation
PRODUCT CODE 978-3-86691-091-1
DETAILS www.linguattec.net